

OPINION 705

BLISSUS BURMEISTER, 1835 (INSECTA, HEMIPTERA): ADDED TO THE OFFICIAL LIST OF GENERIC NAMES

RULING.—(1) The application for the use of the plenary powers to designate a type-species for *Blissus* Burmeister, 1835, is hereby rejected.

(2) The generic name *Blissus* Burmeister, 1835 (gender : masculine), type-species, by monotypy, *Blissus hirtulus* Burmeister, 1835, is hereby placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology with the Name Number 1593.

(3) The following specific names are hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology with the Name Numbers specified:

(a) *hirtulus* Burmeister, 1835, as published in the binomen *Blissus hirtulus* (type-species of *Blissus* Burmeister, 1835) (Name No. 1979);

(b) *leucopterus* Say, 1832, as published in the binomen *Lygaeus leucopterus* (Name No. 1980).

(4) The family-group name *BLISSINAE* (correction of *BLISSIDA*) Stål, 1862 (type-genus *Blissus* Burmeister, 1835) is hereby placed on the Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology with the Name Number 366.

(5) The family-group name *BLISSIDA* Stål, 1862 (type-genus *Blissus* Burmeister, 1835) (an incorrect original spelling for *BLISSINAE*) is hereby placed on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Family-Group Names in Zoology with the Name Number 402.

HISTORY OF THE CASE (Z.N.(S.) 1471)

The present case was submitted by Dr. James A. Slater and Dr. W. E. China in February 1961. The application was sent to the printer on 6 April 1961 and was published on 10 November 1961 in *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **18** : 346–348. Public Notice of the possible use of the plenary powers in the present case was given in the same part of the *Bulletin* as well as to the other prescribed serial publications (*Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **4** : 51–56) and to seven entomological serials. An objection by Dr. E. Wagner was published in *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **19** : 172.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

On 3 October 1962 the Members of the Commission were invited to vote under the Three-Month Rule on Voting Paper (62)39 either for or against the proposals set out in *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **18** : 347–348. At the close of the prescribed voting period on 3 January 1963 the state of the voting was as follows:

Affirmative votes—thirteen (13), received in the following order: China, Stoll, Mayr, Hering, Borchsenius, Bonnet, Riley, Munroe, Jaczewski, Vokes, do Amaral, Evans, Kühnelt.

Negative votes—ten (10): Lemche, Holthuis, Obruchev, Uchida, Binder, Alvarado, Brinck, Key, Bradley, Mertens.

On Leave of Absence—one (1): Prantl.

Voting Papers not returned—three (3): Hemming, Poll, Tortonesc.

Commissioner Boschma returned a late affirmative vote and Commissioner Miller a late negative vote.

On 18 January 1963 the members of the Commission were again invited to vote, on Voting Paper (63)1, either for or against the proposals relating to *Blissus* Burmeister. Attached to this Voting Paper was an explanatory note which, having given the results of voting on Voting Paper (62)39 (see above), continued as follows:

"The proposal involving the use of the plenary powers, therefore, whilst having gained a majority vote has not obtained the two-thirds majority necessary for a plenary powers decision of the Commission. In accordance with the Commission's By-Laws, the vote taken on V.P. (62)39 is therefore treated as a preliminary vote only and the proposals are now resubmitted on V.P. (63)1 for a final decision. If less than two out of every three Commissioners voting on V.P. (63)1 votes for the use of the plenary powers then the Code will be strictly applied and *Blissus* will be placed on the Official List of Generic Names with its correct type-species, *Blissus hirtulus*.

"The following comments were made by Commissioners in returning V.P. (62)39:

L. B. Holthuis (10.x.62): I believe that the Commission should interfere with name changes due to changes in taxonomic views, only in extreme cases. The fact that there are hardly any comments by specialists on this case, and the only comment is negative, indicates in my opinion that this is not such an extreme case.

D. V. Obruchev (26.x.62): I am much astonished at this proposal. If the American entomologists have erroneously referred some Nearctic bugs to a Palearctic genus, they must select for them a new generic name. It is a very dangerous precedent. Now everybody can claim that his wrong conception of a genus be sanctioned by the Commission.

T. Jaczewski (12.xi.62): The stabilization of the name *Blissus leucopterus* (Say), used generally in economic entomology for about 90 years, is in my opinion of greater importance than the more formal objections raised by Dr. E. Wagner.

R. Alvarado (13.xi.62): If a "change of name" (*Bull.* 18 : 347) is inevitable, I think that the objection of Dr. Wagner should be carefully considered to avoid instability.

P. Brinck (14.xi.62): It seems evident that the proposal means transference of the name *Blissus* to a group of species not included in Burmeister's description, that it means a change of genus type and that it involves confusion as regard a series of palaearctic (and possibly Ethiopian and oriental) species. By putting *leucopterus* in a new genus (e.g. *Neoblissus*) this could be avoided and I doubt if it would cause any serious trouble.

K. H. L. Key (16.xi.62): I think the Commission should be cautious about intervening in situations such as this, where name-changing results from taxonomic rather than purely nomenclatural causes. I am also much influenced by Wagner's objections (1) that Burmeister's description of *Blissus* could not apply to *leucopterus* Say, and (2) that the impact of a change in generic name could be greatly diminished if the new name were constituted as a modification of the name *Blissus* (e.g. *Parablissus*).

J. C. Bradley (22.xi.62): I think Dr. Wagner is correct. If *Blissulus* were used for a new genus containing *leucopterus* the impact upon economic literature would not be too severe.

R. Mertens (1.i.63): I refer to the statement by E. Wagner, and I am of the same opinion. I strictly vote against the proposal."

At the close of the prescribed voting period for Voting Paper (63)1, 18 April 1963, the state of the voting was as follows:

Affirmative votes—ten (10): China, Hering, Bonnet, Jaczewski, Mayr, Uchida, Stoll, Hemming, Kühnelt, Evans.

Negative votes—fourteen (14): Holthuis, Vokes, Obruchev, Key, Riley, Lemche, Alvarado, Bradley, do Amaral, Binder, Brinck, Boschma, Tortonesc, Mertens.

On Leave of Absence—two (2): Poll, Prantl.

Commissioners Munroe and Borchsenius returned late affirmative votes and Commissioner Miller a late negative vote. The following comments were made by Commissioners in returning their votes:

Dr. W. E. China (21.i.36): Commissioners have not understood the importance of the name *Blissus* in N. American economic literature. The palaearctic *Blissus*, type *hirtulus*, is a relatively rare genus with no economic literature whatever.

Dr. T. Jaczewski (31.i.63): I see no good reason to change my opinion expressed in my letter of Nov. 12, 1962. Stability of nomenclature is of importance in the first place to non-taxonomists, in this case to economic entomologists. The plenary powers should be used just to preserve such long-accepted names as *Blissus leucopterus* (Say). *Blissus hirtulus* Burmeister is a species rarely met with in hemipterological literature, even in taxonomic work.

Ernst Mayr (25.ii.63): There are numerous precedents where the Commission has set aside original type designations for the sake of stability. There seems no particular merit to preserve the name *Blissus* for a rather obscure group of African lygaeids.

Professor J. Chester Bradley (4.iii.63): I wish to support and emphasize the remarks of Commissioner Key.

Dr. E. G. Munroe (19.iv.63): Although I agree in principle with many of the objections raised, I consider the name *Blissus leucopterus* to be so exceptionally familiar in the economic literature as to deserve special treatment. I therefore vote for the proposal.

ORIGINAL REFERENCES

The following are the original references for the names placed on the Official Lists and Index by the Ruling given in the present Opinion:

BLISSIDA Stål, 1862, an incorrect original spelling for BLISSINAE q.v.

BLISSINAE Stål, 1862 *Öfvers K. svensk. Vetensk.-Akad. Forhandl.* 1862 : 210, 212

Blissus Burmeister, 1835, *Handb. Ent.* 2 : 290

hirtulus, *Blissus*, Burmeister, 1835, *Handb. Ent.* 2 : 290

leucopterus, *Lygaeus*, Say, 1832, *N. Sp. Het. Hemipt. N. Amer.* : 14

CERTIFICATE

I certify that the votes cast on Voting Papers (62)39 and (63)1 were cast as set out above, that the proposals contained in Voting Paper (63)1 as an alternative to the use of the plenary powers has been duly adopted, and that the decision so taken, being the decision of the International Commission, is truly recorded in the present Opinion No. 705.

W. E. CHINA

Acting Secretary

International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature

London

22 January 1964